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## THE REAL KNOWLEDGE OF A FOREIGN COUNTRY

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By L. L. STROEBE

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(Continued)

### HISTORY

Next to geography, history is the most important subject to be studied in order to gain an understanding of the foreign country. Half a semester, which means between twenty and twenty-five recitations, is a very short time to master such a complicated subject, and all we can hope to accomplish in this time is to give the students a kind of a frame work, a skeleton of the historical development and a more detailed knowledge of a very few important periods. Great stress should be laid on a short and clear outline. There are about twenty historical events and their dates which the students should commit to memory and it will be the task of the instructor, first to decide which dates are absolutely necessary and then to put them together in such a way that the students can see their inner connection. As a very short outline in the foreign language is needed, the natural thing would seem to have the students study one of the little manuals which are used for that purpose in the schools abroad. However, these books are all written from the point of view of the foreign country and they all presuppose a certain amount of knowledge which our students do not possess and could not be expected to possess. So the instructor will have to work out an outline for his own needs. An attempt at such an outline for German history has been made in Stroebe-Whitney, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur* (H. Holt, New York), where each period of literature is preceded by an historical introduction. Short manuals of history used in the secondary schools abroad should be used freely by the students as reference books. For French, Lavissee, Ernest, *La deuxième année d'histoire de France* (Librairie Armand Colin, Paris) can be recommended; for German, Friedrich Neubauer, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte für höhere*

*Lehranstalten* (Halle); for Spanish, Freyre y Gongora, EE. Rafael, *Compendio de la Historia de la España* (Madrid).

The drawback in regard to all these books is that they are written from the foreign point of view and what we need are books written from the American point of view for the use of American students. There are excellent books of that kind to be found, for instance, Schevill, *The Making of Modern Germany* (A. C. McClurg & Co. Chicago, 1916), is a remarkably well written treatise. In less than 200 pages the author gives a clear outline of the complicated political movement which culminated, as the result of the work of many generations, in the unification of Germany in 1871. In connection with the political story the author sets forth the leading facts of the social evolution of the German people itself. Though the book can not be recommended for class use, as it is written in English, students and instructors will derive great benefit from reading it.

After the students have gained a general view of the historical development of the country they are to study more in detail those periods of history which have been especially important in their influence on literature, art, science and on civilization in general. As the purpose of the whole course is to give the students an understanding of the modern, present day life of the foreign nation, special stress should be laid on modern history, particularly on the events and tendencies of the nineteenth and twentieth century. For this purpose some chapters in the large historical works have to be read and discussed. It is impossible to find in French, German or Spanish any one single book which contains all the information needed by the students, so they will have to have access to three or four different books. This again means a considerable amount of work on the part of the instructor, in order to find chapters that are clear and not too long and too detailed for the limited amount of time the students have at their disposal. For French the following books can be recommended: Ernest Lavisse, *Nouveau Cours d'histoire de France* (2 vols, Librairie Armand Colin, Paris); Albert Malet, *Cours d'histoire de France* (2 vols). Both these books are used a great deal in the French lycées and collèges. Another very readable history with good illustrations is V. Duruy, *Histoire de France* (2 vols.).

Of the many books I have studied and experimented with in German the following three seems to me to contain the information we need in the best form. David Müller, *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes* (Vahlen, Berlin); Karl Biedermann, *Deutsche Volks- und Kulturgeschichte* (Bergmann, Wiesbaden); Herman Stoll, *Geschichtliches Lesebuch* (Boysen, Hamburg). The latter is a compilation from various historical writers and the study of this book is recommended in France by the regulations of 1901 for teachers of German in the French lycées and collèges.

In Spanish, R. Altamira y Crevea, *Historia de España y de la Civilización Española* (Heredos de Juan Gill, Barcelona) contains the best material not only for history, but for the general development of Spanish civilization. Unfortunately the book does not deal with the nineteenth century, but Altamira's short manual comes down to 1898 (*Historia de la civilización española*, Madrid). An adaptation in English of the larger work of Altamira has been made by Chapman (*A History of Spain*, MacMillan, New York, 1918), which contains some excellent chapters on the development of Spain in the nineteenth and twentieth century.

There is a great need for a short manual of the history of Latin America in the Spanish language. No short and clear compendium has been written so far; at least, I have not been able to find one. The English book which in a very small compass gives the best information about the history and the conditions of the South American republics is William R. Shepard, *Latin America* (H. Holt, New York, 1914). Bryce's *Observations and Impressions of South America* have been translated into Spanish and the last five chapters give a good general survey of the development of the Latin American countries as a whole. There are separate works about the history of the different republics, for instance Vicente F. Lopez, *Manual de la historia Argentina* (A. V. Lopez, Buenos Aires), but they are all too detailed for our purposes. However, the short address of the Bolivian minister, Calderón, can be highly recommended (Ignacio Calderón, *Bolivia, Address delivered by the Bolivian minister under the auspices of the National Geographic Society at Washington, D. C.*, printed in Spanish and English, London, 1907). In not more than twenty pages Calderón, gives an excellent outline of history and geography of Bolivia. It is very well put together and will be found useful reading. The

address might well serve as a model in form and contents for essays and talks on the other South American states. Each student might be assigned one republic, about which he is to collect the data on geography and history and in his talk he might use the expressions and follow the arrangement of material found in Calderón's address.

Needless to say, for the study of South America or any other country, if the students would make their understanding of the historical books clear and their memories of them lasting, they must locate on the map every geographic feature mentioned in the text and must frequently draw maps to show their understanding of the territorial changes in the different centuries.

The use of pictures will be found very helpful in teaching the history of the foreign country. For French and for German, large pictures can be found which are especially prepared as a help in teaching history and which are used for the purpose in the secondary schools of those countries. For French the *Tableaux d'histoire de la civilisation française* (par Ernest Lavisse and A. Parmentier, *Dix tableaux muraux*, accompagnées de notices explicatives, Librairie Armand Colin, Paris) will be found useful; for German Lehmann's *Kulturhistorische Bilder* (F. E. Wachsmuth, Leipzig) can be highly recommended. The German pictures are 36 inches by 26 inches in size and are artistically done in many colors. There are about twenty-five of them, showing different phases of the life of the past.

Not only are school pictures helpful, but paintings of famous historical persons and incidents should be used as much as possible, thus acquainting the students at the same time with the art of the foreign country. France is particularly rich in beautiful historical paintings. The students might become familiar with such paintings as Boucher: *Madame de Pompadour*; Van Loo: *Louis XV*; David: *Coronation of Napoleon I*, and *Death of Marat*; Gros: *Napoleon at Eylau*; Boilly: *The Triumph of Marat*; Prud'hon: *The Empress Josephine*; Delaroche: *Bonaparte on Mount Saint-Bernard* and *The Murder of the Duke of Guise*, and many others. In studying German history the students ought to know Menzel's pictures of the time of Frederick the Great, especially the *Round Table at Sans-Souci*, the *Flute Concert*, *Frederick on a journey* and the portrait of the king in the three-cornered hat. Then Len-

bach's portraits of *Bismarck* and *William the First* are well worthy of study.

In Spanish, students ought to become familiar with Velasquez' *Prince Balthazar Carlos*; Olivares, *Doña Margarita* and *Doña Maria Teresa of Austria*, *The Surrender of Breda*, etc.; Pradilla's *Surrender of Granada*; Rosalés' *The Will of Isabella the Catholic*; and Sorolla's portraits of the present king and queen will be found interesting.

At the end of the semester different kinds of oral and written tests may be given. Students will have to show that they have a knowledge of the whole material and that they are able to understand and explain quickly historical allusions and terms which occur constantly in reading.

The growth of one dynasty or the growth in importance of one part of the country might be dealt with separately, for instance: 1) Explain the territorial growth of Brandenburg, Prussia, from 800 to 1870; 2) Draw three maps, the first for the time from 800 to 1618, the second one from 1618 to 1800, the third one from 1800 to 1871, and explain in chronological order the reasons and causes for the territorial changes; 3) Explain in a short but clear way the following expressions: *Das Heilige Römische Reich deutscher Nation*, *der Deutsche Bund*, *der Norddeutsche Bund*, *das neue deutsche Reich*, *Junker*, *Landsknecht*, *die schwarz-weissen Grenzpfähle*, *die Reaktion*, *die Sachsenkaiser*, *die Könige von Sachsen*, *das niedersächsische Gebiet*.

Whatever has been learned must be combined with the material learned before and the study of history affords the best opportunity for a review in geography. Several longer topics might be assigned which combine these two subjects, for instance: 1) You are planning a summer's trip to France (Germany, Spain) and you are especially interested in places which played an important part in the history of the country. Draw a map, showing your itinerary, give the reasons why you wish to visit these cities and buildings and describe the historical events which happened there; 2) What historical events happened in the part of the country which is today Normandy, Castile, the kingdom of Saxony? 3) Draw a map of Germany showing the proposed new republics and explain in how far they are built up on old historical and racial divisions.

Not only geography, but also art and architecture are closely related to the study of history and review lessons might be planned to combine these two subjects. The most important monuments or the most important historical buildings of one city or of one part of the country might be assembled and explained in the light of history, or a number of representative historical paintings might be grouped together which show important phases in the development of the country.

Most students electing a course in "Realien" are prospective teachers and they are all interested in the question of how much history is to be taught in the high school in connection with the study of modern languages. So the students might work out the very shortest kind of an outline, suitable for high school work. Another good assignment is to make a historical introduction for such books as are frequently used in the high school and which need some historical explanations in order that the students may understand them better. In German it might be an introduction for *Minna von Barnhelm* or for *Höher als die Kirche*; in French it might be for *Mademoiselle de la Seiglière* or *Les Oberlé*.

(To be continued)

Vassar College.